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### *Challenges to Equality: Poverty and Race in America.* Chester Hartman (Ed.).

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way. Although the book appear to be written for students, it will also be of value to practitioners who will be interested in Ezell's argument that advocacy is a pervasive endeavor in social work and the human services. Advocacy is not, the author contends, a separate, peripheral field of social work practice for specialists who devote their professional lives to political work but an integral component of all social work practice. Edzell presents this argument in a way that will make sense to mainstream practitioners who have tended to view advocacy as a rabble rousing activity divorced from their everyday interests. His clear and eloquent presentation of the issues, and his insistence on ethical behavior will convince readers that advocacy is an integral component of all social work practice.

The book is divided into three sections. The first deals with general issues of advocacy and includes a discussion of definitions, the need for advocacy and a very useful chapter on the ethics of advocacy. Part two is concerned with advocacy practice setting out the strategies and tactics that are routinely used in the field. The final section offers a discussion of the issues, dilemmas and challenges of advocacy. Part two of the book is particularly useful covering a wide range of advocacy activities. In addition to legislative advocacy, it contains chapters on legal advocacy, community advocacy and agency advocacy. Although Edzell regards political advocacy as just one of several forms of activism, his discussion is particularly appropriate to the political arena. Irrespective of the setting, the authors offers an in depth discussion of the importance of needs assessment, problem formulation, mapping decision systems and selecting strategies and tactics. These strategic issues many apply to all forms of advocacy but they are especially relevant to the social work profession which needs to engage in political action with greater force and commitment. Hopefully this excellent book will help the profession to do so in effective ways.

Chester Hartman (Ed.), *Challenges to Equality: Poverty and Race in America*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2001. \$ 68.95 hardcover, \$ 26.95 papercover.

Racial oppression and institutional discrimination in modern-day America is a real and all too tangible aspect of the social

fabric. Examples abound—the voting fiasco in Florida; the disparity of resources in the Oakland School District; the environmental racism of East St. Louis; the growing number of welfare clients who are being ‘timed out’ of welfare; the disproportionately higher rates of illness and death for minority children; the high risk of African-Americans experiencing impoverishment in their lifetime. The litany goes on and the need for effective change is urgent.

Many Americans do not see or choose not to believe that racism festers at the heart of society. Led by savvy neo-conservative Republicans who gained the political grandstand in the mid-1980s, the national agenda has turned away from eradicating racial inequality and back to blaming individuals for their lack of success. In the view of many Americans, to make racism an issue of inequality is, in this era of individualism, un-American. And yet, racism thrives just below the social surface in so many aspects of social life. The political trumpet calls Americans to arms of individual responsibility and civil commitment. Any citizen who is in need is seen as deviant. In this spirit of individual responsibility, many of the programs and policies intended to reduce disparity of opportunity have been derailed. Recent legislative action to end Affirmative Action is one example; the so-called welfare reform legislation of 1996 is another.

Congressman John Lewis, in his opening remarks for Chester Hartman’s compilation of essays on race and inequality in America, writes poignantly that America is a single family, living in the same house comprised of many different rooms, and sharing one roof. Should one section of the house fall, the roof comes down on all. Thus begins a necessary discussion on racism in America. The question is not whether racism and inequality exist in America, but rather, how can racism and inequality be eradicated in the 21st Century?

This book is a conversation about racism. Hartman has gathered some of the most prominent thinkers of the time and allowed them space to debate the policies of the day in the areas of racial integration, poverty, education, democratic participation, and environmental justice. The result is a lively, informative discussion on the path the United States needs to take in order to effectively end racism and eliminate inequality. The essays provide a focused

perspective on salient issues, not only depicting the reality of what is, but dreaming of what could be. Rather than merely decrying society's lack of response to racial inequality, the essays are replete with potential solutions. Whether these solutions will be implemented, remains to be seen.

Hartman's book is a 'must-read' for social scientists, academics, policy makers and students alike. The edited collection is informative, provocative, and engaging. Perhaps the only shortcoming of the work is lack of coherence across the essays. A concluding section that weaves the ideas of the different authors into an American response to racial inequality would strengthen the overarching message of the book, that America divided will never enjoy national security or tranquility.

Rosanna Herta and Nancy L. Marshall (Eds.), *Working Families: The Transformation of the American Home*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001. \$ 50.00 hardcover, 19.95 papercover.

During the past century, unprecedented social and economic shifts have irrevocably altered social institutions. Specifically, demographic transitions, industrialization and economic activities have contributed to a fundamental change in the composition of the workforce. The dramatic increase in the numbers of employed women into the labor market, combined with the rise of dual earner families, has led researchers to closely examine the changing roles of work, family, and community. Extant research in this area has focused on the individual decisions made in the context of work, workplace equality issues and the challenges faced by women in maintaining work and family. Recent census data reveals that the complex relationship between work and family is still evolving, with the latest figures demonstrating that the proportion of working mothers has significantly declined for the first time since 1976.

Hertz and Marshall have compiled this collection of chapters from the perspective that work and family are not distinct and autonomous domains, nor should research attempt to separate them. The editors argue that although the workforce composition has changed, the workplace has not changed. The first section of the book outlines the fundamental changes that have occurred within the family over the last 40 years, including the